

# Problem Behavior and Urban, Low-Income Youth

## A Randomized Controlled Trial of Positive Action in Chicago

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**Background:** Youth problem behaviors remain a public health issue. Youth in low-income, urban areas are particularly at risk for engaging in aggressive, violent, and disruptive behaviors.

**Purpose:** To evaluate the effects of a school-based social-emotional learning and health promotion program on problem behaviors and related attitudes among low-income, urban youth.

**Design:** A matched-pair, cluster RCT.

**Setting/participants:** Participants were drawn from 14 Chicago Public Schools over a 6-year period of program delivery with outcomes assessed for a cohort of youth followed from Grades 3 to 8. Data were collected from Fall 2004 to Spring 2010, and analyzed in Spring 2012.

**Intervention:** The Positive Action program includes a scoped and sequenced K-12 classroom curriculum with six components: self-concept, social and emotional positive actions for managing oneself responsibly, and positive actions directed toward physical and mental health, honesty, getting along with others, and continually improving oneself. The program also includes teacher, counselor, family, and community training as well as activities directed toward schoolwide climate development.

**Main outcome measures:** Youth reported on their normative beliefs in support of aggression and on their bullying, disruptive, and violent behaviors; parents rated youths' bullying behaviors and conduct problems; schoolwide data on disciplinary referrals and suspensions were obtained from school records.

**Results:** Multilevel growth-curve modeling analyses conducted on completion of the trial indicated that Positive Action mitigated increases over time in (1) youth reports of normative beliefs supporting aggressive behaviors and of engaging in disruptive behavior and bullying (girls only) and (2) parent reports of youth bullying behaviors (boys only). At study end-point, students in Positive Action schools also reported a lower rate of violence-related behavior than students in control schools. Schoolwide findings indicated positive program effects on both disciplinary referrals and suspensions. Program effect sizes ranged from  $-0.26$  to  $-0.68$ .

**Conclusions:** These results extend evidence of the effectiveness of the Positive Action program to low-income, minority, urban school settings, and to middle school-aged youth.

**Trial registration:** This study is registered at ClinicalTrials.gov NCT01025674.  
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Kendra M. Lewis and Niloofar Bavarian were employed at Oregon State University, and Joseph Day was employed at the University of Illinois at Chicago, when this research was completed.

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# Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature

**United States. Education Office**



## **Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature:**

Low Income Youth in Urban Areas Bernard Goldstein, Barbara Steinberg, Harry C. Bredemeier, 1967      **Low Income Youth in Urban Areas** Bernard Goldstein, 1967      **Low Income Youth in Urban Areas. A Critical Review of the Literature. [By] Bernard Goldstein ... with the Assistance of Barbara Steinberg and Harry C. Bredemeier** Bernard GOLDSTEIN (of Rutgers, the State University.), Harry Charles Bredemeier, Barbara Steinberg, 1967      **Low Income Youth in Urban Areas** Bernard Goldstein, Barbara Steinberg, Harry C. Bredemeier, 1967      **The Poor: a Selected Bibliography** Peter R. Maida, John L. McCoy, 1969      **Inclusion in Urban Educational Environments** Denise E. Armstrong, Brenda J. McMahon, 2006-06-01 This book is motivated by our experiences in working with students and their families in urban communities We are particularly concerned about the urgent imperative to address the endemic educational and societal challenges that pervade the lives of urban students particularly those who live in poverty are of minority and immigrant backgrounds and are otherwise marginalized within the current educational discourses and practices In spite of the fact that over the last 3 decades policy makers educators and communities across the globe have called for in depth structural changes this is rarely evidenced in the discourses practices and structures within academic and practitioner spheres This reluctance despite articulations to the contrary can be directly linked to normative theoretical and practical perspectives that are defined by assumptions that constrain urban students within restrictive boundaries These narrow outsider worldviews based on notions of what ought to be combined with ignorance of the realities of students lives focus on deviance and deficits They blind prospective change agents to the strengths and richness that students bring and they delimit the transformative potential of social justice praxis within urban environments The resulting discourse in the form of deficit beliefs thoughts actions and dialogues shapes urban research theory and practice We contend that in order to counteract the debilitating impacts of these harmful constructions of urban and social justice it is important to clarify this terminology      **Final Report...educational Specifications for a Comprehensive Elementary Teacher Education Program, University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio** United States. Education Office, 1968      **OE [publication]** , 1968      *Miscellaneous Publication* , 1969      The Consumer Behavior of Children and Teenagers , 1969      1967 Annual Supplement John B. Simeone, Alfred de Grazia, Carl E. Martinson, 2013-12-01      **Educational Specifications for a Comprehensive Elementary Teacher Education Program** University of Toledo, 1968      *Multicultural Education* James A. Banks, Cherry A. McGee Banks, 2010 Multicultural Education is a reader which helps educators understand the concepts paradigms and explanations needed to become more effective practitioners in culturally racially and language diverse classrooms      **Research in Education** , 1974      **Resources in Education** , 1995-10      **Catalog of Copyright Entries. Third Series** Library of Congress. Copyright Office, 1971      Successful Pathways for the Well-Being of Black Students Khanare, Fumane Portia, Marina, Brenda L.H., 2023-05-23 A grassroots understanding of well being can be an effective approach to meeting the needs of children in

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## **Table of Contents Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature**

1. Understanding the eBook Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature User Reviews and Ratings
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature and Bestseller Lists

5. Accessing Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature Free and Paid eBooks
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature Public Domain eBooks
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature eBook Subscription Services
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature Budget-Friendly Options
6. Navigating Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature Compatibility with Devices
  - Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Interactive Elements Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
8. Staying Engaged with Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Setting Reading Goals Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Low Income Youth In Urban Areas A Critical Review Of The Literature
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
- Exploring Educational eBooks

### 14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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